

Message Text

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ACTION FBOE-00

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 A-01 SY-05 OC-06 CCO-00
AID-05 ICA-20 PC-05 CIAE-00 AGRE-00 DODE-00
COME-00 /055 W
-----070396 190556Z /13

R 181210Z JUL 78
FM AMCONSUL TURIN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0917
INFO AMEMBASSY ROME
AMCONSUL FLORENCE UNN
AMCONSUL GENOA UNN
AMCONSUL MILAN UNN
AMCONSUL NAPLES UNN
AMCONSUL PALERMO UNN
AMCONSUL TRIESTE UNN

UNCLAS TURIN 0298

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ASEC, IT
SUBJ: FIRE FIGHTING EQUIPMENT

REF: STATE 163204

1. THE DEPARTMENT S WARNING (REFTEL) UNTRAINED PERSONNEL NOT TO ENDANGER THEMSELVES BY ATTEMPTING TO PERFORM THE ACTIVITIES OF PROFESSIONAL FIRE FIGHTERS SHOULD BE EXPANDED TO ALERT POSTS OF THE DANGERS INHERENT IN USING FILTER TYPE MASKS IN OTHER THAN SITUATIONS FOR WHICH THEY WERE DESIGNED AND ISSUED.

2. THE USE OF FILTER TYPE MASKS IN FIRE SITUATIONS SHOULD BE PROSCRIBED.

3. THESE TYPES OF MASKS PROVIDE A MEASURE OF RELIEF FROM RESPIRATORY DISCOMFORT NORMALLY EXPERIENCED IN A SMOKE
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CHARGED ATMOSPHERE, BUT ARE SO DANGEROUS THAT MANY PROFESSIONAL U.S. FIRE DEPTS HAVE STOPPED USING THEM. THE NEW YORK CITY FIRE DEPARTMENT DISCONTINUED USING A FILTER TYPE MASK MADE EXPRESSELY FOR FIRE FIGHTING, AFTER SEVERAL DEATHS OF PROFESSIONAL FIRE FIGHTERS AND FIRE OFFICERS WHO DESPITE YEARS OF EXPERIENCE MADE ERRORS OF JUDGEMENT. 4REGARDIN THE CAPABILITIES OF FILTER TYPE MASKS, THE

FIRE DEPARTMENTS WHICH CONTINUE TO UTILIZE HAVE ESTABLISHED STRICT REGULATIONS LIMITING THEIR USE TO CERTAIN SPECIFIC TYPES OF OPERATIONS.

4. THE USE OF SUCH MASKS IN OXYGEN DEFICIENT ATMOSPHERES (BELOW 16 PERCENT OXYGEN NECESSARY TO SUSTAIN LIFE) COMMONLY ENCOUNTERED AT FIRES IN ENCLOSED OR UNVENTILATED SPACES IS DEADLY.

5. AN ADDITIONAL DANGER IS THAT THE WEARER EXPERIENCES LITTLE RESPIRATORY DISCOMFORT WHICH NORMALLY LIMITS APPROACH TO AREAS OF POSSIBLE DANGER, AND IS ABLE TO REMAIN IN OR PENETRATE SUCH AREAS AFTER IT BECOMES UNTENABLE FOR AN UNMASKED PERSON.

6. IT IS THEREFORE EASY TO IMAGINE HOW HIGHLY MOTIVATED AND INNOVATIVE FOREIGN SERVICE PERSONNEL, IF NOT SPECIFICALLY WARNED IN ADVANCE, MIGHT IN A FIRE SITUATION, REMEMBER THE AVAILABILITY OF THIS EQUIPMENT AT POST (GAS MASK) AND ATTEMPT TO USE IT FOR NON-DESIGN PURPOSE WITH TRAGIC RESULTS.

7. IF DEPT. AGREES, WE STRONGLY SUGGEST ABOVE INFO SHOULD BE SENT TO ALL POSTS AS A FOLLOW-UP TO REFTTEL.
WRIGHT

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NNN

Message Attributes

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Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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Disposition Event:
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SAS ID: 1963608
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FIRE FIGHTING EQUIPMENT
TAGS: ASEC, IT
To: STATE
Type: TE
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